

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01 /071 W

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R 081709Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2046

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLAB, FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH REPORT ON PCI

1. LABATT HAD OPPORTUNITY TO READ TELEGRAM FROM FRENCH AMBASSADOR IN ROME (PUAUX) REPORTING ON RECENT CONVERSATION HE HAD WITH PCI SECRETARY GENERAL BERLINGUER. AFTER AN IMPRESSIONISTIC DESCRIPTION OF BERLINGUER AS INTELLIGENT, RELAXED, SERIOUS, CAPABLE OF EXPRESSING HIMSELF IN PERFECT FRENCH, BUT NOT AS JOVIAL OR ENERGETIC AS SOME OF HIS COMRADES, PUAUX REPORTED FOLLOWING ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS HE POSED TO BERLINGUER:

(A) THE PCI IS NOT EAGER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GOVERNMENT AT THIS TIME AND IS PRESENTLY CONCENTRATING ON THE LOCAL CHANGES WHICH WERE MADE POSSIBLE BY THE RESULTS OF THE RECENT REGIONAL ELECTIONS.

(B) SHOULD THE PCI WIN THE 1977 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD IT ACCEPT TO FORM GOVERNMENT WITH THE SOCIALISTS AND OTHER PARTIES

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OF THE LEFT. "THE CENTER MUST TAKE PART IN SUCH A

GOVERNMENT," THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE BEING TO FORCE THE RIGHT WING OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS TO QUIT THE PARTY.

(C) THE "HISTORICAL COMPROMISE" IS THE ITALIAN WAY OF BRINGING ABOUT SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL CHANGES AND AS SUCH IT IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE TYPE OF COMMUNIST-SOCIALIST ALLIANCE THAT HAS DEVELOPED, FOR EXAMPLE, IN FRANCE. UNLIKE FRANCE, "ITALY CANNOT AFFORD TO BE DIVIDED INTO TWO ROUGHLY EQUAL BLOCS."

(D) SHOULD THE PCI FIND ITSELF IN THE GOVERNMENT IT WOULD SUPPORT WITHOUT RESERVATIONS ITALY'S FOREIGN POLICY SINCE THE WAR, WHICH IS BASED ON NATO, AND WOULD NOT EVEN CONSIDER THE TYPE OF WITHDRAWAL FROM THE MILITARY ALLIANCE SUCH AS WAS UNDERTAKEN BY FRANCE AND GREECE.

(E) SITUATION IN PORTUGAL HAS GONE TOO FAR BECAUSE THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS HAVE MISINTERPRETED THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE PORTUGUESE PEOPLE SINCE THE OVERTHROW OF THE PREVIOUS REGIME.

2. IN HIS COMMENT PUAUX SAID THAT HE IS INCLINED TO GO ALONG WITH THOSE IN ITALY WHO SAY THAT BERLINGUER IS SINCERE AND GENUINELY BELIEVES IN WHAT HE SAYS. HE WENT ON, HOWEVER, TO RAISE THE QUESTION WHETHER THE PCI ONCE IN POWER WOULD CONTINUE TO ABIDE BY PREVIOUS PRONOUNCEMENTS OR WHETHER THE HARDLINERS IN THE PCI WOULD PREVAIL TO IMPLEMENT AN OLD-STYLE ORTHODOX COMMUNIST LINE. TELEGRAM CONCLUDES WITH THE STATEMENT THAT PUAUX WILL CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH PCI LEADERS AND MONITOR THEIR VIEWS AND ACTIONS.

3. COMMENT: THE READING OF THE PUAUX TELEGRAM DOES NOT REFLECT VERY FAVORABLY ON ITS AUTHOR. ALTHOUGH SOME OF THE QUESTIONS ASKED ARE PERTINENT AND DIRECT, THEY LACK DEPTH IN THAT THEY WERE NOT FOLLOWED UP WITH QUESTIONS WHICH WOULD HAVE TESTED THE EXTENT TO WHICH BERLINGUER HAS THOUGHT THROUGH HIS REPLIES AND EVEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MORE WHETHER THESE REFLECTED PCI CONSIDERED POLICY. FURTHERMORE PUAUX'S COMMENT SEEMS HARDLY WORTHY OF A MAN OF HIS DIPLOMATIC EXPERIENCE NOR OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MATERIAL BERLINGUER GAVE HIM TO REFLECT UPON, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SITUATION WHICH ITALY IS FACING SINCE THE LAST ELECTIONS.  
GAMMON

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